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A PROCLAMATION

against fighting of Duels or ſingle Combats.

CHARLES, by the Grace of GOD, King of Great *Britain*, *France* and *Ireland*, Defender of the Faith, to our Lovits, Macers or Meſſengers at Arms, Our Sheriffs in that part conjunctly and ſeverally, ſpecially conſtitute, Greeting: Foraſmuch as the fights of Duels, and ſingle Combats are moſt unlawful, and a dangerous practice, contrar to the Law of GOD, and the principles of the Chriſtian Religion and policie, and prohibited by the Laws of this Our Kingdom, and of other well governed Kingdoms and Nations: And eſpecially by the twelfth Act of King *James* the ſixth, Our Royal Grand-Father of bleſſed memory, His fixteenth Parliament, whereby it is Statute, that no perſon thereafter, without His Highneſs licence, fight any ſingular Combat, under the pain of death, and the eſcheit of their moveables, and the Provoker to be puniſhed with a more ignominious death then the Defender: Nevertheleſſe, the ſaid abuſe and wickedneſſe is become ſo ordinary, and grown to that height, that frequently, upon miſtakes, and eſcapes of words uttered inconſideratly in company, by perſons otherwayes in freindſhip and acquaintance, and upon the leaſt ſhadow and apprehenſion of any other injurie (whereof if there were any ground, the perſons concerned might, and ought, to have and ſeek redreſs from Our Council, or Our other Judicatories) They preſume and pretend, that they are concerned in honor, to take reparation at their own hands in the ſaid wicked, and conſequentially moſt diſhonorable way of fighting Duels, and do give and accept appeals and challenges, and do go to the Fields and fight Duels; To the great contempt and and affront of Our Authority, and the great hazard of both Parties, their Friends, and Seconds, and deſtruction of their Souls and Bodies, if they ſhould dye in ſo unlawful an action and occaſion: And though they ſhould ſurvive, if they ſhould be brought under Our juſt diſpleaſure, and the compaſſe of the Law, and capital puniſhment. For reſtraining and preventing whereof, We, with advice of Our Privy Counſil, do ordain, That the ſaid Act of Parliament ſhal be put in punctuall execution: And whenſoever Our Council ſhal have information, or notice that any Duel is fought, That they ſhal be careful, and give order to ſeiſe upon the delinquents, and impriſon them, untill they be brought to their tryal and puniſhment according to Our Laws; and to that effect ſhal give ſpecial order to Our Advocat, to proſecute and purſue them. And ſeing the granting of pardon and mercy to perſons guilty of the ſaid crime, and the hope of impunity may be an occaſion of cruelty, and imbolden others to adventure upon, and commit the like wickedneſſe; Therefore ſuch perſons, who ſhall be guilty of the ſaid crime, are not to expect that remiſſions ſhal be granted to them hereafter: And We declare and ordain, That if the fighting of a Duel, or ſingle Combat ſhall be deſigned and undertaken by any Perſons, and upon notice and diſcovery the ſame ſhall be prevented, and that they ſhall be hindered and reſtrained from fighting, yet the Challenger, and alſo the Defender, who ſhall accept any ſuch challenge, ſhall be ſeverely puniſhed, albeit they be hindered and reſtrained from going to, or fighting in the Fields. And likewayes the Seconds of any partie *reſpective*, and theſe who ſhall carry any ſuch challenge or appeal, ſhall be puniſhed in maner aftermentioned; That is to ſay, The Provoker and Appeller ſhall be impriſoned during the pleaſure of Our Council, and fynned, if he be a Nobleman, in the ſum of ſix thouſand pounds Scots: And if he be a landed Gentleman, in the ſum of three thouſand pounds money foreſaid: And if he be of any other inferior quality, that he ſhall be puniſhed as Our Council ſhall think fit; and the partie appealled, and the ſeconds on either ſide *reſpective*, and theſe who ſhall carry any ſuch challenge, ſhall be impriſoned during Our Councils pleaſure, and fynned, if they be Noblemen, in the ſum of three thouſand pounds money foreſaid; If they be landed Gentlemen, in the ſum of one thouſand five hundred pounds; And if they be of any other inferior quality, as Our Council ſhall think fit; Beſide what other pain or puniſhment Our Council ſhall think fit to inflict. And ordains theſe preſents to be Printed, and publiſhed at the Market Croſſe of *Edinburgh*, and other places needfull, That none pretend ignorance.

Given under Our Signet at *Holy-rood-houſe*, the nineteenth day of *March*, one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy four; and of Our Reign the twenty ſixth year.

Al. Gibſon Cl. Sti Concilii.

God ſave the King.

EDINBURGH, Printed by *Andrew Anderſon*, Printer to the King's moſt Excellent MAJESTY. *Anno Dom.*